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his flight from the fortress of the last capital. Twenty pages, which make the conclusion of the book, contain the most singular medley of impious, blasphemous, mystical, dishonest speculations, that can cross a mind bewildered by the basest principles, or originate in a heart thoroughly corrupted.

ART. V.—*A condensed Geography and History of the Western States, or the Mississippi Valley.* By TIMOTHY FLINT, Author of 'Recollections of the last Ten Years in the Mississippi Valley.' In Two Volumes. 8vo. Cincinnati. E. H. Flint. 1828.

IF the merit of a writer is to be measured by the good which his books are calculated to effect, Mr Flint is one of the most deserving authors in the department of belles lettres, that America has produced. He has done more than almost any other individual, to bring the distant sections of the country acquainted with each other. If he did not open the gates of the mountains to the reading world, he has tempted its inhabitants to pass through them, far more frequently than they had ever done before. Of his former work, the 'Recollections of the last Ten Years in the Mississippi Valley,' an account has already been submitted to the readers of this journal. The value of that work has *extorted* commendations from persons not willing to yield them with a good grace. Mr Ward, the late British Chargé d'Affaires at Mexico, makes the following reference to it; 'Should any of my readers wish for information respecting the mode, in which the western settlements [in the United States] have been conducted, and the extraordinary manner in which they have thriven, I can refer them to Flint's "Journal of a Ten Years' Residence in the Valley of the Mississippi," which, although written in a most uncouth style, is both an interesting and instructive work.' Mr Ward has here incorrectly given the title of Mr Flint's work, although he uses the common marks of quotation. Inasmuch as he undertakes to censure the book, in respect to manner, we think he ought to begin his censure by calling it by the right name. A 'most uncouth style' is a vague reproach. It ought to import a remarkably odd, strange, and unusual manner. These are not

the characteristics of Mr Flint's style ; of which the principal defects are haste and negligence. He has all the essential elements of a first-rate style ; and if he would subject his works to a severe revision, and prune off a little redundancy,—the natural outpouring of a mind full of the subject, and of a glowing imagination,—he would produce a better style than Mr Ward's.

The work before us is one of higher pretensions than the 'Recollections.' It is one of that class of works, which has been rendered popular, in this part of the country, by Dr Belknap's 'History of New Hampshire.' It contains a historical, geographical, and statistical account of the Valley of the Mississippi, first in the general, and then of the various separate states within its limits ; and in this account are included general notices of the various productions found in the same region, in the different departments of natural history. This single suggestion, as to the nature of the work, will show that it cannot be intended to exhaust any one of the topics. It is a work for popular use ; such an one as did not before exist, and such as will be perused with great interest by all classes of general readers. It will not, in reference to any of the great subjects treated, for instance, the history of the discovery and exploration of the Mississippi and the country through which it flows, supply the place of the original authorities, in the researches of the student. But it will give a general knowledge of this subject, and a comprehensive view of every thing connected with the western country ; which can be found, we firmly believe, in no other work, and which it would cost the most industrious and judicious reader infinite pains and much time to collect from all the other sources of information. In fact, Mr Flint assures us, that something more than half of his work is original, in the strictest sense of the word, containing the results of his own observation, during twelve years of residence and of travelling in the region described. He alludes to the haste, with which he was led to bring the work before the public, and to his views of its improvement, in the event of a second edition. We feel no hesitation in saying, that if Mr Flint will, at his leisure, subject it to a careful correction in point of style ; take some portions of it into a new draft, with a view to a little more fulness on some topics and compression on others, according to the relative importance of their subject matter ; subjoin the particular reference for facts, that are in dispute, or otherwise important, and extend it perhaps to a third volume,

which will give it a compass by no means out of proportion to the magnitude of the subject ; he will have the satisfaction of achieving a work, on which he may safely rest his own reputation, and which will reflect credit on the literary character of the country.

The perusal of such a work excites mingled sentiments of delight and astonishment, and almost of awe, in the mind. The phenomenon, which it presents, is of strange interest. While literary Europe is just learning something of the United States ; and the influence on her system is beginning to be felt of those establishments, which are now two centuries old, we behold, in the Valley of the Mississippi—a wilderness at the period of the American revolution,—a population one third more numerous than that of the United States in 1783. Many of these youthful republics, as we are all rightfully called, are in that state of overflowing population, which characterizes the oldest countries in Europe ; although the abundance of vacant lands, and the facility of effecting a settlement upon them, have placed that point with us much lower than it stands abroad. The young men, who have emigrated from the Atlantic coast to the West, did not, like the emigrants from Ireland and the Palatinate, leave potato-fare and six pence a day behind them. On the contrary, they left a country of high wages and hearty diet. If emigration be the safety-valve of states, ours is calculated to open at a very low pressure ; in others, the governments have loaded it with additional weights, threatening the most disastrous explosions. A heavy tax on the sale of the fixed property of emigrants exists in some of the governments of Germany.

We are not acquainted with any instance, in the history of the world, of so rapid an extension of civilization over a barbarous waste. We all know how little had been effected, in a century and a half, by the French, in the same region ; and comparatively speaking, how tardy was the progress of the Atlantic coast, under the auspices of England. Under the patronage of the government of the United States, the West has done more in fifty years, than the Atlantic coast was able to do in three times that period ; and yet, at the time of the commencement of the revolution, the growth of the colonies of England was habitually spoken of, as a miracle in human history. It certainly adds, in the highest degree, to the astonishing character of these facts, that, although during the last half

century the Atlantic coast has suffered such a steady and powerful drain, it has itself continued to advance in population, wealth, and arts, with no perceptible diminution in the ratio of progress. On the contrary, the contrast between the present state of the oldest settlements in the country and their condition in 1775, is not less surprising, that the rapidity, with which, from the overflowing of these settlements, a new world has grown up beyond the Alleghanies.

The author begins his work, with some observations on the general features of the Valley of the Mississippi, and the face of the country. Under the head of *mountains*, the following observations on the passages across the great western ridge will command the attention of our readers. If we mistake not, the perusal of the account of Lewis and Clarke's expedition has had considerable effect on the public mind, in establishing the impression, that the waters of the Columbia river are exceedingly difficult of access, from the eastern side of the Rocky Mountains, and a consequent indisposition to push our settlements into that region. Any facts, therefore, which show that no such natural barrier exists between the two oceans, become of great importance and interest.

‘As on the Alleghanies, the rivers, that run in opposite directions from these mountains, generally have their sources near each other. In following the beds of these rivers up to their sources in the mountains, we find the easiest paths and the gentlest acclivities, by which to cross them. The character which they had gained, of being continuous, high, and everywhere alike rugged, and a barrier, almost impassable, between the regions east and west of them, from the descriptions of the first adventurers who crossed them, seems now to have yielded to a very different impression. Various leaders of expeditions of trappers have crossed these mountains, in directions more southern, than those of Lewis and Clarke. They affirm, that they found none of those formidable and almost insurmountable barriers, which undoubtedly exist on the route of those distinguished travellers. We have at this moment under our eye extracts from the journal of Mr Ashley, the leader of an enterprising and powerful association for procuring furs, who has crossed these mountains at different points. This journal narrates the account of a passage over them, from the sources of the Platte to lake Buenaventura, on the western side. It asserts, that he found an easy passage even for loaded carriages; with an ascent nowhere as sharp, as on the national road over the Cumberland mountains to Wheeling. He even asserts, that the

acclivity was so gentle, as nowhere to have an ascent of more than three degrees; and that nature has provided not only a practicable, but a good road quite to the plains of the Columbia. The testimony of travellers seems to be uniform, that to the eye, indeed, the ranges are unbroken and continuous. But nature seems everywhere to have indicated her wish, that no part of the earth should be interdicted by unsocial barriers from communication with the rest. Through the loftiest and most continued ranges there are found chasms, natural bridges, ascents along the beds of rivers, and corresponding descents on the opposite side, that render a passage over them comparatively smooth and easy.' Vol. 1. pp. 35, 36.

Mr Flint next passes to a brief account of the *minerals* of this region. The substance described in the following passage, though seemingly different in some of its properties, as color, might supply the place of the *meerschaum* or *écume de mer* of Anatolia, which is in great request in the north of Europe for pipe heads.

'On the waters of the Little Sioux of the Missouri, and on a branch of the St Peter's of the upper Mississippi, is found a beautiful species of indurated clay,—constituting a stone of the most singular appearance, commonly called 'pipe stone,' from the circumstance, that the savages in all these regions, quite to the Western sea, make their pipes, and sometimes other ornaments, of it. It is said to be cut from the quarry, almost with the ease of wood. It hardens in the air, and receives an exquisite polish of impalpable smoothness. It is nearly of the color of blood; and is a beautiful article for monumental slabs, vases, and requirements of that sort. If it be as abundant, and as easily procured, as has been said, it will one day become an article of extensive use through the country. For, although marble abounds, this is a more beautiful material, than any marble that we have seen. It has been generally asserted, that an imaginary line of truce extends round the places, where this stone is found, within which the most hostile tribes pursue their business of cutting out stones for pipes in peace.' Vol. 1. p. 44.

Mr Flint divides the Valley of the Mississippi, in respect to temperature, into four climates. The first commencing at the sources of the river, terminates at *Prairie du Chien*, and corresponds with the climate of the region between Montreal and Boston. The Irish potato, in this climate, attains its utmost perfection; and wheat and the cultivated grasses succeed well. The apple and the pear tree need a southern exposure; the peach requires still greater care; and during five months

in the year, the cattle require shelter in severe weather. The second climate is that of Illinois and Missouri, the region between the forty-first and thirty-seventh degree of north latitude. Cattle are seldom housed in winter, though often needing shelter. The climate is not so favorable to cultivated grasses, as that just mentioned. Wheat is at home in this region; the persimon and the pawpaw flourish throughout its whole extent. The apple, the pear, and the peach tree exist here in perfection. The third climate extends from the thirty-seventh to the thirty-first degree of north latitude. Below the thirty-fifth degree, in this region, the apple tree fails to bring its fruit to perfection. Cotton is raised for home consumption, between this parallel and the thirty-third degree; below the thirty-third degree, it is the staple article of cultivation. The fig tree ripens its fruit in this climate. From the thirty-first degree downward to the gulf of Mexico is the climate of the sugar cane and the sweet orange tree. The olive would probably thrive in this climate. The streams are never frozen. The forests are in blossom early in March. There is a thunder-storm almost every night.

On the subject of *diseases*, the author remarks, that as a general principle, the most attractive soils, the rich and heavily timbered alluvial tracts, are the least healthy. Some of these, however, as the Scioto lands in Ohio, which proved the graves of the first settlers, have, by the effect of cultivation, become healthy. The remark, which has been made of the old continent, is confirmed by experience in the Valley of the Mississippi; namely, that very considerable degrees of heat, and of moisture, existing separately, are compatible with the healthiness of a climate, but when the two are combined, disease is the result. The *Campagna di Roma* is neither the hottest nor the wettest part of Europe; but the action of an Italian sun on its marshes is strong enough to produce the *malaria*. For this reason, the dryness proceeding from cultivation, removing one of the elements of disease, naturally changes an unhealthy into a salubrious region. The fact asserted in the following extract is one, of which we believe the confirmation is found in all countries subject to *malaria*.

‘ Another fact, in relation to the choice of a residence, with a view to its salubrity, has been abundantly and unanswerably proved by experience. It is, that bluffs on the margins of wide bottoms and alluvial prairies are more unhealthy situations, than those, in

the bottom or prairie, which they overlook. This fact has been amply demonstrated on the Ohio bottoms and bluffs, on the margins of the alluvial prairies of the upper Mississippi, and, in short, wherever a high bluff overlooks a wide bottom. The inhabitants on the airy and beautiful bluffs, that bound the noble prairies of the upper Mississippi, in an atmosphere apparently so pure, as to preclude all causes of disease, are far more subject to fever and ague, than the people that inhabit below them on the level of the prairies. The same has been remarked of the Chickasaw bluffs, Fort Pickering, or Memphis, Fort Adams, Natchez, Baton Rouge, and the bluffs, generally, along the great water courses. Yet, though such is the uniform teaching of experience, so deceptive is the salubrious aspect of these airy hills, that swell above the dun and murky air, that seems to lie, like a mist, over the wide bottoms below them, that most people, in choosing their residence, will be guided by their senses, in opposition to their experience. We know not, whether the theory, by which this fact is explained, is a sound one, or not. It is said, that the miasma, or noxious air from putrid vegetation and stagnant water in the swamps and bottoms, is specifically lighter, than atmospheric air; that, of course, it rises from the plains, and hovers over the summits of the bluffs, here finding its level of specific gravity; and that, were it colored, it would be seen overlaying the purer strata of air beneath it.' Vol. i. pp. 56, 57.

Mr Flint next proceeds to the description of the *trees* and *shrubs*. The cypress is a very important tree. It begins to be seen on the wet lands, near the mouth of the Ohio, and is, with the swamp gum, the most common tree in the deep swamps from that point to the gulf of Mexico. It is a tree of a very singular character. Under its shade arises a multitude of curiously shaped knobs, called cypress knees. These are regular cone-like protuberances, in height and circumference not unlike tall and tapering beehives. The tree itself springs from a knob or knee of this kind, of an enlarged size, and, at the surface of the ground, of thrice the circumference of the proper trunk. This conical foundation of the tree rises to the height of from six to ten feet, and from its apex towers the main trunk of the tree, with scarce any diminution in its circumference for a length of sixty or eighty feet. But we must leave Mr Flint to pursue the account in his own words.

‘Very near its top, it begins to throw out multitudes of horizontal branches, which interlace with those of the adjoining trees, and when bare of leaves, have an air of desolation and death, more easily felt, than described. In the season of vegetation, the

leaves are short, fine, and of a verdure so deep, as almost to seem brown, giving an indescribable air of funereal solemnity to this singular tree. A cypress forest, when viewed from the adjacent hills, with its numberless interlaced arms, covered with this dark brown foliage, has the aspect of a scaffolding of verdure in the air. It grows, too, in deep and sickly swamps, the haunts of fever, musquitos, moccasin snakes, alligators, and all loathsome and ferocious animals, that congregate far from the abodes of man, and seem to make common cause with nature against him. The cypress loves the deepest, most gloomy, inaccessible, and inundated swamps; and south of thirty-three degrees, is generally found covered with the sable festoons of long moss, hanging, as it seems, a shroud of mourning wreaths almost to the ground. It seems to flourish best, where water covers its roots for half the year. When it rises from eight or ten feet water of the overflow of rivers, the apex of its buttress is just on a level with the surface of the water. It is then, in many places, that they cut it. The negroes surround the tree in *periogues*, and thus get at the trunk above the huge and hard buttress, and fell it with comparative ease. They cut off the straight shaft, as suits their purpose, and float it to a raft, or the nearest high grounds. Unpromising as are the places and the circumstances of its growth, no tree of the country, where it is found, is so extensively useful. It is free from knots, is easily wrought, and makes excellent planks, shingles, and timber of all sorts. It is very durable, and incomparably the most valuable tree in the southern country of this valley. It is a fortunate circumstance, that it inhabits the most gloomy and inaccessible regions, which will not come into cultivation for ages. It will of course have a better chance, not to share the fate of the most useful timber on the valuable uplands. The improvident axe soon renders timber difficult to be procured, in a country in the centre of forests. All the cypress forests, however, that are easily accessible, on the lower Mississippi and its tributaries, have been stripped of their timber by the Mississippi lumberers, who have floated to New Orleans millions of feet of this timber, from the lands of the United States, and who have already created a scarcity of this species on the margin of the Mississippi. There are, however, in the vast swamps of the Mississippi, Arkansas, Red river, and Florida, inexhaustible supplies of cypress still remaining.' Vol. i. pp. 62, 63.

South of the thirty-first degree of latitude, in the lower country of Florida, along the coast, and from sixty to a hundred miles into the interior; and above the shores of Louisiana, to half that depth, the *live oak* is at home. It is not found west of the Sabine. It is not a very tall tree; but spreads its

branches widely. It is, as is well known, when green, heavier than water. The islands along the shores of the Gulf of Mexico furnish this tree in abundance. It is so difficult to cut down, burn, or in any way remove from the soil, that in these islands, which have lately been in request for the cultivation of sugar, this precious tree is regarded as an incumbrance.

The great value of this timber, in a national point of view, and the circumstance that it has frequently, and especially of late, engaged the attention of the national legislature, have led us to think, that some farther information on the subject would be acceptable to our readers. We derive most of the following facts from a very interesting letter of Mr Southard, secretary of the navy, to the chairman of the naval committee of the House of Representatives, dated the twenty-ninth of January, 1827.

The importance of the live oak timber to the navy of the United States, very early attracted the attention of the government. The navy department was first established in 1798, and the year following, the sum of two hundred thousand dollars was appropriated by law, to enable the President to direct 'the purchase of growing or other timber, or of lands on which timber was growing, suitable for the navy, and to cause the proper measures to be taken to have the same preserved for the future uses of the navy.' At this time, almost the only live oak timber, within the undisputed boundary of the United States, was contained in the states of Georgia and South Carolina. By the subsequent acquisition of Louisiana and Florida, the United States have become possessed of large tracts of land covered with this timber. Under the authority of the law just alluded to, the President of the United States, on the nineteenth of December, 1779, purchased Grover's Island, containing three hundred and fifty acres for seven thousand five hundred dollars; and in April, 1800, Blackbeard's Island, containing about sixteen hundred acres, for fifteen thousand dollars. Both of these islands are situated on the coast of Georgia. They still belong to the United States, and have generally been under the care of an agent; but the most valuable part of the timber has been removed, and the islands are now of little value, in reference to live oak, except as affording spots, where plantations of it might be established.

By a law of the first of March, 1817, the secretary of the navy, under the direction of the President, was authorized to

appoint agents and a surveyor to explore the public lands, and select so much of such portions as produced live oak and red cedar, as would be sufficient for the service of the navy. The land so selected was to be reserved from sale, and penalties were enacted against such as should cut or carry away these or other kinds of timber from the public lands. Subsequent laws were passed for carrying this system more effectually into execution. Two agents and a surveyor were appointed, under the law of 1817. They explored the coasts of Alabama and Louisiana, and made voluminous reports of their proceedings to the navy department. In consequence of the information which they contained, the President, on the twenty-ninth of February, 1820, directed the reservation of several islands in lake Chitimaches, Louisiana, containing in all about seventeen thousand acres, and estimated, at that time, to have upon them about thirty-seven thousand live oak trees of various sizes, fit for the naval service, a part of which, however, were difficult of approach, and some, perhaps, inaccessible. In May, 1821, an agent was appointed, with a small salary, to protect these reservations against intruders. No timber has as yet been cut from these islands, for the navy.

By the acquisition of Florida, vast quantities of live oak timber, as we have said, came into the possession of the United States. But the perplexity of the land titles, in this territory, threw great difficulties in the way of the government in obtaining it. A very great quantity of the public lands was instantly covered by fabricated claims; and while the commissioners were sifting them, the land was stripped of its live oak. A law was passed in February, 1822, authorizing the employment of the land and naval force of the United States to protect the timber on the public lands. Under this law, orders were immediately given to Captain Elton, in the brig *Spark*, to proceed to the St John's river in Florida, and prevent the cutting of timber on the public lands, or transporting it out of the territory. Similar orders have, from time to time, been renewed; and the commanders of our West India squadron, and of the revenue cutters in this part of our waters, have been instructed to the same effect.

The peculiar character of the Florida coasts, abounding with inlets, and the uncertainty of the land titles, went far to obviate the effect of these wholesome measures. An agent sent with Captain Elton reported, that he doubted, if there

were a timbered acre in the territory not claimed. The establishment of a commission for ascertaining the land titles in Florida, did something to remedy this evil ; and in 1825, the subject was again brought before the attention of the President ; but for want of an appropriation nothing could be done. Early in the fall of 1826, an agent was again sent into Florida, with full instructions on the subject. His reports to the department confirm the information, that the best of the live oak timber had been removed from the coast, as far as he had examined it. From Jacksonville, on the St John's, he writes, that ' the St John's, up to that point, together with its tributary creeks, fifteen miles up, is entirely cleared. Live-oak has, in fact, been a staple product. The collector at the bluff informed me, that for the last six or eight years, the number of vessels that had cleared, loaded with it, has averaged one hundred and fifty, not carrying each less than two thousand feet.' As this would amount in eight years to more than two millions of feet, it is probably an exaggeration. But it is well known that great quantities of it have been exported, and, it is supposed, purchased by foreign governments.

In 1827, this subject was brought before the House of Representatives, by one of its most able members, Colonel White, the delegate from Florida, who moved a resolution which led to the communication from the department, abovementioned, and to provisions by law to effect the preservation of the timber. Colonel White stated, in introducing his resolution, that he was well informed that the British government had its agents in the Southern States and Florida, engaged in purchasing and shipping live oak to England, cut by moulds, in the shape of knees, heart-hooks, and stern-posts, &c. He also stated, that he had been informed, that the Emperor of Russia had ordered two barrels of the acorns of the live oak to be sent to Russia, for the purpose of experiment in the southern portions of his empire. Colonel White recommended the establishment of a plantation of live oak, near the navy yard at Pensacola, where the government possesses a tract of land already covered with the young trees.

We presume that these agencies in Florida, for supplying the British government with our oak, were established while that territory was a Spanish province, and have been continued from the difficulty of detecting and breaking them up. In consequence of the representations of Colonel White and of the

secretary of the navy, provision was made in one of the sections of a law of the third of March, 1827, for the preservation of the live oak timber on the lands of the United States, and the reservation of those lands from sale.

Before quitting this subject entirely, we cannot but commend the attention paid, by the present Executive of the United States, to the introduction into this country of the vegetable productions of other regions. The circular, issued for that purpose, and addressed to the consuls, naval commanders, and others in the foreign service of the United States, is fresh in the recollection of the public, having been extensively circulated in the newspapers. When it is considered that cotton and rice are foreign products of comparatively recent introduction into the United States, the strongest encouragement suggests itself for multiplying experiments on all the subjects of the vegetable kingdom, from climates corresponding with any of those in this country. The teak-tree would undoubtedly grow in any climate adapted to the live oak.

We return to Mr Flint's work. The following description of a *cane-brake* (a swamp filled with *arundo gigantea* or *miegia macrosperma*) presents a scene which must be new to many of our readers.

'Every one has seen this reed in the form in which it is used for angling-rods. It grows on the lower courses of the Mississippi, Arkansas, and Red river, from fifteen to thirty feet in height. We have seen some, in these rich soils, that would almost vie in size with the bamboo. The leaves are of a beautiful green—long, narrow, and dagger-shaped, not unlike those of Egyptian millet. It grows in equidistant joints, perfectly straight, almost a compact mass; and to us, in winter especially, is the richest looking vegetation that we have ever seen. The smallest sparrow would find it difficult to fly among it; and to see its ten thousand stems, rising almost contiguous to each other, and to look at the impervious roof of verdure which it forms at its top, it has the aspect of being a solid layer of vegetation. A man could not make three miles in a day through a thick cane-brake. It is the chosen resort of bears and panthers, which break it down, and make their way into it, as a retreat from man. It indicates a dry soil, above the inundation, and of the richest character. The ground is never in better preparation for maize, than after this prodigious mass of vegetation is first cut down and burned. When the cane has been cut, and is so dried, as that it will burn, it is an amusement of high holiday to the negroes, to set fire to a cane-brake thus prepared.

The rarefied air in the hollow compartments of the cane bursts them with a report, not much inferior to a discharge of musketry; and the burning of a cane-brake makes the noise of a conflicting army, in which thousands of muskets are continually discharging. This beautiful vegetable is generally asserted to have a life of five years, at the end of which period, if it has grown undisturbed, it produces an abundant crop of seed, with heads very like those of broom-corn. The seeds are farinaceous, and said to be not much inferior to wheat. for which the Indians, and occasionally the first settlers, have substituted it. No prospect so impressively shows the exuberant prodigality of nature, as a thick cane-brake. Nothing affords such a rich and perennial range for cattle, sheep, and horses. The butter that is made from the cane pastures of this region, is of the finest kind. The seed easily vegetates in any rich soil. It rises from the ground, like the richest asparagus, with a large, succulent stem; and it grows six feet high, before the body hardens from this succulency and tenderness. No other vegetable could furnish a fodder so rich or abundant; nor, in our view, does any other agricultural project so strongly call for a trial as the annual sowing of cane, in regions too northern for it to survive the winter. We suppose this would be in latitude 39°. Vol. i. pp. 80, 81.

The account of *zizania aquatica* or *folles avoines*, (p. 84.) is very interesting. It is, says Mr Flint, the great resource of the Northern Savages and Canadian traders and hunters. It springs up in waters six or seven feet in depth, where the bottom is soft and muddy, and is, of all the *cereal*ia, except maize, in the opinion of our author, the most prolific. We join him in the expression of surprise, that,

‘Amidst all our eager and multiplied agricultural researches, little attention has been paid to this interesting and valuable grain. It has scarcely been known except by Canadian hunters and savages, that such a grain, the resource of a vast extent of country, exists. It surely ought to be ascertained, if the drowned lands of the Atlantic country, and the immense marshes and stagnant lakes of the South, will grow it. It is a mistake, that it is found only in the northern regions of this valley. It grows in perfection on the lakes about Natchitoches, south of 32°, and might, probably, be cultivated in all climates of the valley.’ Vol. i. p. 85.

The *stramonium* is represented by Mr Flint as a great pest of the Western country. On the richest bottoms it grows fifteen feet in height, and of a size and compactness to turn cattle. In some places, no inconsiderable part of the labor on the highways is to cut up this weed. Its popular name is *Jimson*, a

corruption of *Jamestown*, from which place in Virginia, it is supposed to have spread through the country.

The following is a description of a splendid species of *nymphæa* ;

‘ Among the flowering aquatic plants, there is one, that for magnificence and beauty stands unrivalled and alone. We have seen it on the middle and southern waters ; but of the greatest size and splendor on the bayous and lakes of the Arkansas. It has different popular names. The upper Indians call it *panocco*. We have seen it designated by botanists by the name *nymphæa nelumbo*. It rises from a root, resembling the large stump of a cabbage, and from depths in the water, from two or three to ten feet. It has an elliptical, smooth, and verdant leaf, some of the largest being of the size of a parasol. These muddy bayous and stagnant waters are often so covered with these leaves, that the sandpiper walks abroad on the surface of the leaves, without dipping her feet in the water. The flowers are enlarged copies of the *nymphæa odorata*, or New-England pond-lily. They have a cup of the same elegant conformation, and all the brilliant white and yellow of that flower. They want the ambrosial fragrance of the pond-lily ; and resemble in this respect, as they do in their size, the flowers of the laurel magnolia. On the whole, they are the largest and most beautiful flowers, that we have seen. They have their home in dead lakes, in the centre of cypress swamps. Mosquitoes swarm above. Obscene fowls wheel their flight over them. Alligators swim among their roots ; and moccasin snakes bask on their leaves. In such lonely and repulsive situations, under such circumstances, and for such spectators, is arrayed the most gaudy and brilliant display of flowers in the creation. In the capsule are embedded from four to six acorn-shaped seeds, which the Indians roast, and eat, when green ; or they are dried and eaten as nuts, or are pulverized into meal and form a kind of bread.’ Vol. i. pp. 89, 90.

We would gladly, also, extract the description of the long moss, which is used, in a prepared state, for many of the purposes of horse-hair ; but we must hasten onward to other matter.

Our limits do not allow us to make any extracts from the chapter on *animals*. But we must refer the reader to the article of *Buffalo*, page 94, of *Beaver*, page 97, and of *Grizzly Bear*, page 98. Mr Flint (page 102) observes, that it is a fact to which he can bear ocular testimony, that the squirrels cross rivers, sometimes swimming, and at other times, on a chip or piece of bark, raising and spreading their tails by way of sail. It is related, adds he, that in the year 1811, they em-

igrated from the north towards the south by thousands, and with a front of some regularity, along the lower part of the state of Ohio, and the whole boundary of Indiana. Great numbers of them were drowned in attempting to cross the Ohio. The same thing took place the last year.

The chapter on *serpents* contains matter which will be found interesting to the general reader. The following narrative, though not sufficiently vouched to be received as true in its detail, is probably quite as authentic as the *mythus*, to which Mr Flint compares it; and serves to show us some of the terrors, whether of the imagination or of real life (and the former are perhaps as distressing as the latter), which await the first settlers of the wilderness.

‘We have seen great numbers that have been bitten by rattle-snakes, or copper-heads, or moccasins; and we have never seen a fatal case. We read, indeed, of a most tragical occurrence, more horrible in the relation than the ancient fiction of Laocoon. An immigrant family inadvertently fixed their cabin on the shelving declivity of a ledge, that proved a den of rattle-snakes. Warmed by the first fire on the hearth of the cabin, the terrible reptiles issued in numbers, and of course in rage, by night into the room where the whole family slept. As happens in those cases, some slept on the floor, and some in beds. The reptiles spread in every part of the room, and mounted on every bed. Children were stung in the arms of their parents and in each other’s arms. Imagination dares not dwell on the horrors of such a scene. Most of the family were bitten to death; and those who escaped, finding the whole cabin occupied by these horrid tenants, hissing, and shaking their rattles, fled from the house by beating off the covering of the roof, and escaping in that direction.’ Vol. i. p. 115.

Lizards are called ‘ground-puppies.’ Varieties of small camelions are found in this region. They are considered as harmless animals, though when taken, they show a disposition to bite. Probably their bite is not venomous. They will change, in half an hour, says Mr Flint, to all the colors of the prism. Green seems to be their favorite color, and while they assume it, the under part of the neck is scarlet. The throat swells, and the animal emits a sharp note like that of a grasshopper. ‘We have placed them,’ says Mr Flint, ‘on a handkerchief, and they have gradually assumed all its colors. Placed on a black surface they become brown; but they evidently suffer while under this color, as is manifested by their uneasy movements, and by strong and quick palpitations. They are very active and nimble animals, three or four inches in length.’

‘*Murena siren* is a very singular animal,’ says Mr Flint, ‘and, as far as we know, undescribed by naturalists. It somewhat resembles the lamprey, and is nearly two feet in length. It seems intermediate between the fish and the lizard class. It has two short legs placed near the head. It is amphibious, and penetrates the mud with the facility of a crawfish.’ Vol. 1. p. 119.

The crawfish are very troublesome in the waters of the West. Mill-dams are often penetrated and seriously injured by them; and the *levée* of the Mississippi has more than once been so weakened by their perforations, as to be gradually worn through and broken down.

Under the head of *rivers*, Mr Flint has drawn up a general description of the Mississippi and of the tributaries that flow into it, from its source to its mouth, but our space does not allow us to make an extract from it. To this succeeds an interesting chapter on the *Indian population*. Our author appears to us to think a little less highly, than some writers, of the character of the native population of this continent, and hints some doubts as to the nature and extent of their right in the soil of their hunting-grounds. This is too difficult and extensive a topic to be taken up at the present time; and it would, perhaps, be doing injustice to Mr Flint to detach from their connexion, his opinions on matters of controversy. We make the following brief quotation by way of doing justice, on one point, to the course pursued by the general government toward this unfortunate race.

‘All words would be thrown away in attempting to portray, in just colors, the effects of whiskey upon such a race. It is, indeed, the heaviest curse that their intercourse with the whites has entailed upon them. Every obligation of duty, as philanthropists and Christians, imposes upon us all possible efforts to prevent the extirpation of the whole race; the inevitable consequence of their having free access to this liquid poison. We have adverted to the stern and rigorous prohibitions of the general government, and the fidelity with which they are generally carried into effect; and yet, in some way or other, wherever Americans have access, Indians have whiskey. It is understood that the laws of the state governments and of the general government are not in concert upon this subject. It is matter of undoubted fact, that in the states, the Indians find much less difficulty in procuring whiskey, than in the territories; and of course intoxication is far more common. The duties of the states imperiously call upon them to frame laws in unison with those of the general government, and to unite with

that to prevent these unhappy beings from exercising their suicide propensities.' Vol. 1. pp. 184, 185.

The chapter of *monuments* is very interesting, but it is not in our power to dwell upon it.

The subject of the *present population* is, perhaps, that which will furnish the most ample matter of reflection to the philosophic mind. Within the distinct memory of those now on the stage, the Valley of the Mississippi might be called a wilderness; and the population which has since poured into it, has had to contend with almost every kind of obstacle. 'Sickness, solitude, mountains, the war-whoop, and the tomahawk, wolves, and panthers,' presented themselves to the first adventurers. In 1790, the population of the Valley of the Mississippi, exclusive of Florida and the country west of the river, was estimated at one hundred thousand. In 1800, it was something short of three hundred and eighty thousand. In 1810, it was short of a million. In 1820, including the population west of the Mississippi, and rating Florida at twenty thousand, and that of the parts of Virginia and Pennsylvania, which belong to this Valley, at three hundred thousand, the whole population of this region amounted to two million five hundred thousand. Due allowance must of course be made for the effect of emigration. But there is no doubt that in 1830, Ohio, whose population is the largest and densest in the Western states, will be the double of what it was in 1820; and the emigration out of this state is unquestionably equal to the emigration into it.

The *national character of the Western people* is treated by Mr Flint with a manly spirit. The temper of the British journals on this head is truly atrocious. Even the 'New Monthly Magazine,' we are told, says that the Kentuckians flayed Tecumthe, and made razor-straps of his skin! That some traces of the effect of circumstances should be seen, in the manners of the people, is a matter of course; the only just subject of astonishment is, that a country so settled should exhibit all the essential features of a high stage of civilization. To compare Kentucky and Ohio, each within sixty years a savage wilderness, with Ireland, that has been christianized for fourteen centuries, and is within a day's sail of the very metropolis of civilization, and has had for six hundred years the *benefit* of being governed by its laws, would be doing great injustice to Ohio and Kentucky. We believe, in fact, that it would be possible to gather from the public prints of England a fair set-off,

within the circuit of the English counties, for every fact, that has ever been related with truth, for the purpose of showing the barbarity, violence, and immorality of the Western states.

Mr Flint gives curious details of some points of manners in the Western country, in some of which, as the discipline of the steam-boats, our brethren of the West are, it seems, in advance of the Atlantic coast. We can ourselves vouch for the truth of this comparison, and have seen travellers from the West, (who would be alarmed at the imputation of *aristocracy*) shocked with the promiscuous aspect of a steam-boat's company on the Delaware. There is no doubt, that steam-boat civilization (and it is as important a mechanical engine of civilization, as any that has been devised since the art of printing) is carried farther on the Mississippi, than in any other part of the world. The first steam-boat on these waters was seen in 1811. In the Appendix to his work, Mr Flint gives us the names, tonnage, and places of construction, of one hundred and eighteen steam-boats, which navigate the Western waters !

The observations of our author on *the religious character* of the Western people will reward a perusal. We make no apology for the introduction of the following extract.

‘None, but one who has seen, can imagine the interest, excited in a district of country, perhaps fifty miles in extent, by the awaited approach of the time for a camp-meeting ; and none, but one who has seen, can imagine how profoundly the preachers have understood what produces effect, and how well they have practised upon it. Suppose the scene to be, where the most extensive excitements and the most frequent camp-meetings have been during the two past years, in one of the beautiful and fertile valleys among the mountains of Tennessee. The notice has been circulated two or three months. On the appointed day, coaches, chaises, wagons, carts, people on horseback, and multitudes travelling from a distance on foot, wagons with provisions, mattresses, tents, and arrangements for the stay of a week, are seen hurrying from every point towards the central spot. It is in the midst of a grove of those beautiful and lofty trees, natural to the valleys of Tennessee, in its deepest verdure, and beside a spring branch, for the requisite supply of water.

‘The ambitious and wealthy are there, because in this region opinion is all-powerful ; and they are there, either to extend their influence, or that their absence may not be noted, to diminish it. Aspirants for office are there, to electioneer, and gain popularity.

Vast numbers are there from simple curiosity, and merely to enjoy a spectacle. The young and the beautiful are there, with mixed motives, which it were best not severely to scrutinize. Children are there, their young eyes glistening with the intense interest of eager curiosity. The middle-aged fathers and mothers of families are there, with the sober views of people, whose plans in life are fixed, and waiting calmly to hear. Men and women of hoary hairs are there, with such thoughts, it may be hoped, as their years invite. Such is the congregation, consisting of thousands.

‘A host of preachers of different denominations are there, some in the earnest vigor and aspiring desires of youth, waiting an opportunity for display; others, who have proclaimed the Gospel, as pilgrims of the cross, from the remotest North of our vast country to the shores of the Mexican gulf, and ready to utter the words, the feelings, and the experience, which they have treasured up in a travelling ministry of fifty years, and whose accents, trembling with age, still more impressively than their words, announce, that they will soon travel and preach no more on the earth, are there. Such are the preachers.

‘The line of tents is pitched; and the religious city grows up in a few hours under the trees, beside the stream. Lamps are hung in lines among the branches; and the effect of their glare upon the surrounding forest is, as of magic. The scenery of the most brilliant theatre in the world is a painting only for children, compared with it. Meantime the multitudes, with the highest excitement of social feeling added to the general enthusiasm of expectation, pass from tent to tent, and interchange apostolic greetings and embraces, and talk of the coming solemnities. Their coffee and tea are prepared, and their supper is finished. By this time the moon, for they take thought, to appoint the meeting at the proper time of the moon, begins to show its disk above the dark summits of the mountains; and a few stars are seen glimmering through the intervals of the branches. The whole constitutes a temple worthy of the grandeur of God. An old man, in a dress of the quaintest simplicity, ascends a platform, wipes the dust from his spectacles, and in a voice of suppressed emotion, gives out the hymn, of which the whole assembled multitude can recite the words,—and an air, in which every voice can join. We should deem poorly of the heart, that would not thrill, as the song is heard, like the “sound of many waters,” echoing among the hills and mountains. Such are the scenes, the associations, and such the influence of external things upon a nature so “fearfully and wonderfully” constituted, as ours, that little effort is necessary on such a theme as religion, urged at such a place, under such circumstances, to fill the heart and the eyes. The hoary orator talks of God, of eternity, a judgment to come, and all that is im-

pressive beyond. He speaks of his "experiences," his toils and travels, his persecutions and welcomes, and how many he has seen in hope, in peace and triumph, gathered to their fathers; and when he speaks of the short space that remains to him, his only regret is, that he can no more proclaim, in the silence of death, the mercies of his crucified Redeemer.

'There is no need of the studied trick of oratory, to produce in such a place the deepest movements of the heart. No wonder, as the speaker pauses to dash the gathering moisture from his own eye, that his audience are dissolved in tears, or uttering the exclamations of penitence. Nor is it cause for admiration, that many, who poized themselves on an estimation of higher intellect, and a nobler insensibility, than the crowd, catch the infectious feeling, and become women and children in their turn; and though they "came to scoff, remain to pray."

'Notwithstanding all that has been said in derision of these spectacles, so common in this region, it cannot be denied, that the influence, on the whole, is salutary, and the general bearing upon the great interests of the community, good. It will be long, before a regular ministry can be generally supported, if ever. In place of that, nothing tends so strongly to supply the want of the influence resulting from the constant duties of a stated ministry, as the recurrence of these explosions of feeling, which shake the moral world, and purify its atmosphere, until the accumulating seeds of moral disease require a similar lustration again.' Vol. I. pp. 220-223.

The *pursuits of the people* form the subject of a curious chapter, but we have no room for extracts. The reader must absolutely procure the book itself.

Having gone through these several heads, and in a manner of which we have given some specimens, Mr Flint engages in the *general history* of the Valley of the Mississippi, beginning from the earliest accounts and coming down to the present day. Here it is, of course, impossible for us to follow him. This is the part of the work, which, for its great importance and the variety of matter necessarily embraced in it, Mr Flint will do well, in his second edition, to revise. It will bear a fuller detail in some parts. Authorities ought to be stated more frequently. Our author remarks, in the outset of this part of his work, that in the French and Spanish portion of it, he has mostly relied on the manuscript and untranslated work of M. de la Harpe. Some account of so important a manuscript would form the proper subject of a note.

The portion of the work, which is devoted to an account of

the Valley of the Mississippi collectively, is succeeded by a separate account of the states and territories embraced within its limits, namely, the territory of Florida, the states of Alabama, Mississippi, Louisiana, the Arkansas territory, the states of Tennessee, Missouri, Illinois, Indiana, Kentucky, and Ohio. The reader perceives the rich distribution of subjects. We shall have discharged our duty, if in the account we have already given of the work, we have shown it to be one, of whose contents the American student ought to possess himself. He must be a very diligent collector of information, who can read any one of these chapters, without being instructed by it. We do not propose to go into this part of the work, but the following, from the history of Tennessee, will serve as a specimen of its contents.

In 1784, North Carolina passed a law, ceding the country, which now forms the state of Tennessee, to the United States, provided congress should accept the cession within two years; the jurisdiction to be retained by North Carolina till congress should take possession. Upon this, the citizens called a convention, by which the laws of North Carolina, as far as applicable, were declared to be in force in the territory, and the aid of congress was invoked, for the formation of a new state. Meanwhile they ordained that the territory should be governed by a convention, and that this convention should send a delegate to congress.

Congress did not accept this cession, and North Carolina repealed her law. Meantime, however, parties were formed in Tennessee; and while, on one side, it was wished to return under the jurisdiction of North Carolina, on the other side, it was resolved to adhere to the separation. A new convention was called, and the territory was declared to be an independent state, under the name of *Frankland*. The convention announced to North Carolina the independence of the new state, and sent a delegate to congress; but it does not appear that any notice was taken, by that body, of these proceedings.

‘In 1786, the state of Frankland had two conflicting courts in its limits. The one acted under the authority of their own state, and the other under that of North Carolina. Each court claimed, that its decisions were paramount; and in fact, the only one, that had a right to act in the case. A more fruitful source of collision and quarrel can not be imagined, than such a state. The sheriff of Frankland, with his *posse*, in some instances, went into

the other court, seized the papers, and turned the officers out of doors. The North Carolina party, as soon as it had power, retaliated in the same way. Colonel John Sevier was elected the first governor of the state of Frankland. The governor, soon after his induction into office, met the principal man on the North Carolina side of the question. From the windy and inefficient war of words, it soon proceeded to the more decisive war of blows. The argument was soon settled in the primitive way by the dint of fist. But these leaders of state were separated, before victory declared on either side. Their humbler retainers, as they felt in duty bound, imitated the example of their superiors, and lost an eye, or a piece of flesh of less importance from some other part of the body, without being either cooled, or convinced. It was obvious, that in such a crisis things must soon come to a more serious issue, than a fist-fight, or gouging an eye.

‘The county of Washington elected members to represent them in the assembly of North Carolina. Colonel Tipton, who had fought the governor of Frankland, was one of these representatives. A paper containing the names of those, who were willing to accept the terms of North Carolina, and secede from the authority of Frankland, was sent by these members to the assembly. Taxes were imposed by the authority of both legislatures, and, as may be easily foreseen, the people paid neither, with much speciousness, assigning as a reason, that they did not know to which authority they ought to yield their money.

‘This year the Cherokees renewed their attacks upon Tennessee. William Cocke, Esq., was delegated to congress. He made, before that body, an eloquent speech, placing in a strong light the helplessness and misery of their condition, engaged in a civil war on the one hand, and assailed by the merciless savages on the other. This time he was heard, and his representations were acted upon. A general amnesty was passed, in regard to all who expressed a readiness to yield themselves to the authorities of North Carolina. It was enacted, too, that the officers, who had held under the state of Frankland, should be displaced, and their places filled by persons appointed by North Carolina. Many, who held under the new state, had been originally appointed by North Carolina, and had been retained in their offices by Frankland. They were considered by congress in the light of persons, who admitted the authority of the new state. The pacific, and yet decisive measures of congress seemed at once to restore things to their former position, before the formation of the state of Frankland. But under the external appearances of tranquillity remained the smothered fire. There still remained a considerable number, staunch for the cause of the fallen state, and disposed, upon the first favorable appearances, to rear it up again. Governor

Sevier offered the services of these men to Georgia, in the prospect of an approaching war of that state with the Creeks. The legislature of that state having deliberated upon the proposition returned a very polite answer, expressing gratitude for the kindness of the offer, and promising a return of their services in any way, which should not be incompatible with the interests of Georgia. They sent a state of their case to Dr Franklin, soliciting advice. He wrote them in reply, that he thought they had better accede to the propositions of North Carolina.

‘Notwithstanding all these discouraging circumstances, Governor Sevier retained the integrity of his faith in the new state. Georgia, as a state, indeed, was only ready to avail herself of their military services, without promising any return of good offices. But several distinguished individuals of that state wrote to him, expressing their own good wishes, and those of many of the people. He was elected a member of the distinguished society of Cincinnati. A copy of the constitutions of the thirteen states, neatly bound, was presented him, with a very flattering address. The common toast in Georgia was, “Success to Frankland, and its virtuous citizens.” But, all these symptoms of convalescence notwithstanding, in 1787, the legislature of Frankland met for the last time. Little was done, and shortly after the state of Frankland fell by natural decease.’ Vol. II. pp. 31–33.

We have seen maps of the United States, published within a few years at London, on which, where *Tennessee* ought to stand, the word *Franklin* is inserted.

The second volume of Mr Flint’s work contains the account of Tennessee, Kentucky, and Ohio, the most valuable part, perhaps, of the work. Commencing with page 350 of this volume, will be found a sketch of the general order and circumstances of emigration and settlement in the Western states, and the mode of proceeding adopted by a party bound to that region. But this, with many other curious and instructive details, we are obliged wholly to pass over.

The perusal of this work has suggested to us the desirableness of a complete collection of American historians, or historical works relative to the history of the country, to be undertaken by some of our extensive bookselling houses or an association of them. It ought to contain, in a regular series, both the original works and the subsequent compilations; beginning with such productions as Captain Smith’s History of Virginia, Winthrop’s Journal, and Prince’s Chronology, and coming down through compilations of a later date, like Hutchinson’s Massachusetts and Smith’s New York, to works written since

the declaration of independence and at the present day. A complete collection of charters and patents should form a part of the plan. The want of such a collection is severely felt. Of some of the works, which would enter into it, one or two copies only are known to exist in America ; and even of works of recent publication, many are out of print. We have known unavailing search to be made for years, in all our large cities, for such books as Sullivan's *History of Maine* ; and McCall's *History of Georgia*. A collection like that proposed might be made as voluminous, as the public demand was found on trial to require.

ART. VI.—*A History of the Life and Voyages of Christopher Columbus*. By WASHINGTON IRVING. 3 vols. 8vo. New York, and London. 1828.

THIS is one of those works, which are at the same time the delight of readers and the despair of critics. It is as nearly perfect in its kind, as any work well can be ; and there is therefore little or nothing left for the reviewer, but to write at the bottom of every page, as Voltaire said he should be obliged to do, if he published a commentary on Racine, *Pulchrè ! bene ! optimè !* And as the reputation of the author is so well established, that he does not stand in need of our recommendation as a passport to the public favor, it may appear, and in fact is, almost superfluous to pretend to give a formal review of his book. Nevertheless, we cannot refuse ourselves the satisfaction of adding the mite of our poor applause to the ample and well deserved harvest of fame, that has already rewarded the labors of our ingenious, excellent, and amiable fellow citizen ; nor would it, as we conceive, be proper to omit noticing in this journal a work, however well known to the public, which we consider as being, on the whole, more honorable to the literature of the country, than any one that has hitherto appeared among us. Before we proceed to give our opinion in detail of the '*History of the Life and Voyages of Columbus*,' we shall offer a few remarks on the character and merit of Mr Irving's other works, premising that we write under the influ-